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SENTINEL

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Kind word for CIA

While President Ford's defense of the Central Intelligence Agency in his recent interview on television was firm, it also was poorly enunciated with the emphasis falling more on CIA transgressions than upon its achievements.

We are glad that the President spoke out for the CIA and also that he explained the need for an efficient and effective intelligence organization. He noted that such an agency is vital to back up our diplomatic and military planning and without it we would be at the mercy of friend as well as foe.

We have become slightly disgusted with the yammering about the CIA and its links with Howard Hughes. The complaining about the efforts of the CIA to raise the sunken Russian nuclear sub, and the secret barge developed and used, bordered on the ridiculous. Just as the U-2 flights, which became so

notorious during President Eisenhower's administration, were essential to our national defense so are CIA efforts to discover the efforts of other nations to subvert and damage the United States.

We believe the CIA should be prohibited from attempting to subvert other governments and from involvement in domestic affairs but there are vast grey areas in between that are best left to the oversight of the executive officials and congressional groups assigned that responsibility.

Some of those who now are complaining the most about our intelligence work are the same ones who charge the government isn't taking the necessary and proper steps to safeguard the people.

We need thoughtful and considered approaches to our intelligence operations, not just blanket condemnations.